

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HAVANA 00204 232158Z
ACTION ARA-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1021
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 0204

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, ET, SO, CU
SUBJECT: CUBANS CRITICIZE MEETING OF WESTERN FIVE ON HORN

1. GRANMA, JANUARY 23, IN RARE NON-TASS COMMENT ON HORN, CONDEMNS WEEKEND WESTERN FIVE MEETING, QUALIFYING IT AS "TACIT SUPPORT" FOR SOMALI INVASION. GRANMA CITES ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ALLEGING THAT WESTERN FIVE FAILURE TO CONDEMN SOMALIS AND TO CALL FOR WITHDRAWAP OF SOMALI TROOPS REPRESENTS SUPPORT FOR "AGGRESSION". GRANMA ADDS THAT SAID BJRRE'S RELUCTANCE TO ORDER WITHDRAWAL OF SOMALI "REGULAR TROOPS" FROM ETHIOPIA HAS CAUSED ADDIS TO REAFFIRM ITS DECISION "NOT TO INITIATE ANY TYPE OF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH SOMALIA WHILE ENEMY TROOPS REMAIN ON ITS TERRITORY". (COMMENT: CUBAN COMMENTARY ON ETHIOPIA, THUS FAR, HAS GENERALLY BEEN LIMITED TO REPETITION OF TASS STATEMENTS WHICH HAVE EMPHASIZED: (A) SOVIET-CUBAN-ETHIOPIAN AMBITIONS ARE LIMITED TO RESTORING ETHIOPIAN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY--THAT IS, AN INVASION OF SOMALIA IS NOT PLANNED, AND (B) PEACE NEGOTIATIONS CAN ONLY BEGIN IF SOMALI TROOPS IMMEDIATELY WITHDRAW. DEPARTMENT MAY RECALL THAT SOVIETS HERE IN DECEMBER SPOKE OF TWO STAGE PROCESS INVOLVING, FIRST, CEASEFIRE AND, THEN, SOMALI
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TROOP WITHDRAWAL--SEE HAVANA 0808.)

2. ON OTHER ETHIOPIAN NEWS, USINT CONTINUES TO HEAR REPORTS FROM CUBAN AND DIPLOMATIC SOURCES THAT BOTH ACTIVE DUTY AND RESERVE PERSONNEL ARE BEING TRANSFERRED OR CALLED UP FOR SERVICE IN ETHIOPIA. SPANISH EMBASSY HERE SAYS THEY HAVE RECEIVED TWO SEPARATE REPORTS FROM CUBANS OF UNCERTAIN RELIABILITY TO

EFFECT THAT TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND RESERVISTS ARE BEING CALLED UP FOR ETHIOPIAN SERVICE. (COMMENT: WE HESITATE, AT THIS TIME, TO GIVE CREDENCE TO A CALL-UP OF THIS MAGNITUDE. THE EVIDENCE OF SOME TRANSFER OF TROOPS TO ETHIOPIA DIRECTLY FROM CUBA, COUPLED WITH MOUNTING MEDIA ATTENTION TO THE CONTRARY, NATURALLY SPURS SPECULATION AMONG THE LOCAL POPULATION.)

3. FRENCH EMBASSY HERE REPORTS THAT THEY HAVE RECEIVED CABLE FROM ONE OF THEIR CONSULS OUTSIDE ADDIS INDICATING THAT A BOMB ATTEMPT WAS MADE ON LIFE OF RAUL CASTRO AND MENGISTU RECENTLY. PURPORTEDLY, A SENIOR CUBAN OFFICER WAS KILLED BY BOMB EXPLOSION. (COMMENT: FRENCH EMBASSY HERE IS UNABLE TO COMMENT ON VERACITY OF REPORT.)

4. AS POSSIBLE INDICATION THAT HAVANA SEES NO SOLUTION IMMEDIATELY AT HAND, CUBANS REPORTEDLY TOLD AUSTRIANS LAST WEEK THAT THEY COULD OCCUPY FORMER SOMALI CHANCERY.

5. COMMENT: INFORMATION ON CUBAN INTENTIONS IN ETHIOPIA CONTINUES TO BE MURKY. CLEARLY, THERE HAS BEEN TRANSFER OF TROOPS FROM CUBA TO ETHIOPIA IN RECENT WEEKS. BUT EXTENT OF THIS TRANSFER AND ITS ROUTING REMAIN UNCLEAR. ALL INDICATIONS FROM THE CUBAN PRESS ARE THAT THE ETHIOPIANS WILL SEEK TO COMPEL SOMALIA TO WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS FROM FORMER CONFIDENTIAL

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ETHIOPIAN TERRITORY BEFORE BEGINNING ANY TALKS. CUBANS CONTINUE TO BE VAGUE, HOWEVER, ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS SHOULD ETHIOPIAN "COUNTEROFFENSIVE" FAIL OR PROVOKE OUTSIDE RESPONSE.
GLASSMAN

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